This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

+ *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.

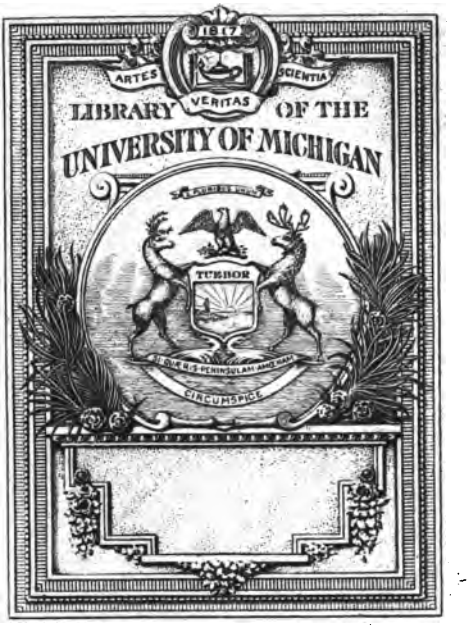
+ *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.

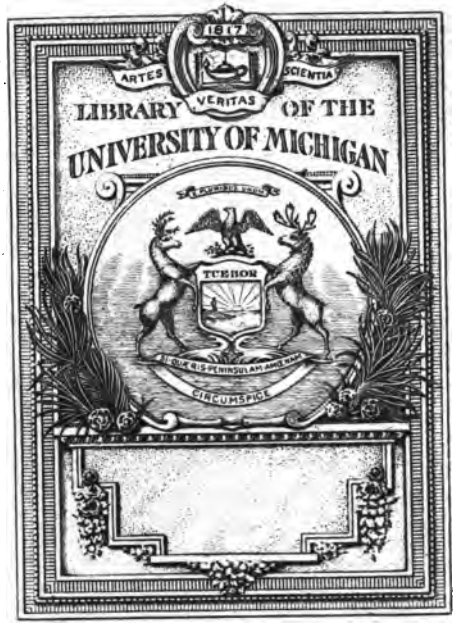
+ *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.

+ *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at `http://books.google.com/`


1817
ARTES
VERITAS
SCIENTIA
LIBRARY OF THE
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN
TUEBOR
CIRCUMSPICE


1817
ARTES
SCIENTIA
VERITAS
LIBRARY OF THE
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN
TUEBOR
CIRCUMSPICE

Licensed by Command of the Right Honorable the Earl of SUNDERLAND.

April [illegible]
1692

J. A. VERNON

Licenc'd by Command of the Right Ho-
norable the Earl of SHREWSBURY.

April 1.
1689.

J. VERNON.

A

LETTER

TO A

MEMBER

OF

Parliament,

In Favour of the

BILL

FOR

Uniting Protestants.

By a Divine of the Church of England.

LONDON:
Printed, and are to be Sold by *Randal Taylor*, near *Stationers-Hall*, 1689.

BX
5202
.L65

Hist. Eng.
Hen. 7
1-28-44
49590

A LETTER to a Member of PARLIAMENT *in favour of the BILL for* Uniting Proteſtants.

1-28-50 BBS

THE *Bill* of *Union*, which being commonly ſpoken of under the leſs popular name of *Comprehenſion*, has ſuffer'd very much among the zealous friends of our *Church*, will certainly meet with a more favourable entertainment when it is more fully underſtood. Many prejudiced againſt the Bill for the name of it.

The *Deſign* of it is not, as ſome have imagined, the *Breaking of our Frame*, but rather the giving a *greater Firmneſs* to it. Of the deſign of it.

No *Alteration*, that I know of, is intended by it, but in *things* declared to be *Alterable* by the * *Church* it ſelf. And if *things Alterable* be *alter'd* upon the grounds of *Prudence* and *Charity*; and *things Defective* be *ſupplied*; and *things Abuſed reſtored* to their *proper uſe*, and things of a more *Ordinary compoſition*, *reviſed* and *improved*; whilſt the *Doctrine*, *Government* and *Worſhip* of the *Church* remain entire in all the *ſubſtantial parts* of them; we have all reaſon to believe that this will be ſo far from *injuring* the *Church*, that on the contrary it ſhall receive a very great *Benefit* by it. That it is agreeable to the Principles of the Church of *England*.
* Preface to the Common Prayer.

This has been the manner of all *Chriſtian Churches* in all *times*, not excepting the *Roman Church* its ſelf; which has And of all other Chriſtian Churches

changed her *Offices* in every Age, but generally for the worſe: And yet other *Churches* havenot t ereby incurr'd
) argument *Inconſtancy* our *Church.* the imputation of *Unconſtancy* and of *unfixing* things *well-fixed.* For that which is *always to ſtand* is *fixed*, and that which is *Variable* is by the diſcretion of the Church *accommodated* to *Seaſons*, and *Places*, and *Occaſions.*

ne ſuch ng promi- to be done us.

Some *Condeſcentions* have been already *Promiſed*, and *Promiſes* are ſacred things. They were ſo very lately renewed, that he muſt have a very ſhort *Memory*, and a worſe *Conſcience*, that has already forgot them. When the Bigots among the *Papiſts*, and thoſe who *blindly* at leaſt, if not *wilfully* went into their Intereſt raiſed a mighty Clamour againſt the *Church* of *England* as a PERSECUTING CHURCH, the Members of it declared that ſo much as there was of *perſecution* in it, was all a *Court Artifice*, and gave their word for the ſhowing of *ſuch a temper* (when opportunity ſhould favour them) as might fully acquit them of ſuch a *Spirit* of which they were ſo publickly and ſo vehemently accuſed.

id neceſſa- to remove Objecti- that has n made a- nſt us of r being a *ſecuting urch.*

e are now ter able to ow what is ing to be e in this tter then were etofore.

And after ſo long a time ſince the *Reformation*, and ſo many Revolutions, and ſo many Objections heard and Conſider'd, a *review* of our *Conſtitution* (if we had not paſs'd any *Promiſe*) may ſeem fit to be made, and now to be capable of being made much better, than it could have been formerly.

at it is the y way to ove the *Tenters ples.*

It is true indeed for any *Objections* that can be made againſt our *Conſtitution* as now it is, we need not enter on any *alteration* of it. All that have ever yet been brought having been often and fully *Anſwered* with great ſtrength and plaineſs. But it is our unhappineſs (or rather theirs) that they who have moſt need of Books of this kind, either

ther will not, or are not ſuffer'd to read them. Or if they chance to read, yet they come with ſuch *prejudice* to them, as prevents a diligent and impartial peruſal of them. The ſureſt way therefore to remove all *objections* of this kind is to remove the occaſion of them, and that will be done by this *Bill* of diſcreet Charity.

That this *Bill* will be no prejudice to *Eccleſiaſtical Power.*

I am well aware of your highly commendable tenderneſs to *Eccleſiaſtical Power*, and this *review* is not deſigned to be made without the *Sanction* of it, expreſly mentioned in the *laſt words* of the *Bill.* The preſent *Bill* is but a *Preparatory Act*, and may as well be paſs'd in *Parliament* as *Queen Elizabeths Injunctions* without offence to the *Clergy.*

Nor take away the *Fences* of our Church.

Neither need you dread this *Bill* as a means to the throwing down the *Fences* of our *Church. Fences* which are always attacked, and which put us perpetually upon the defenſive part, have more of *Trouble* in them than ſecurity. And certainly after the *Eſſentials* and convenient *decencies* of *Religion* are provided for, our ſtrongeſt *fences* under God are *Unity* and *Number.*

Nor lead the way to the yielding up *All* to the *Diſſenters.*

I cannot ſo far ſuſpect your *judgment* as to think you will ſay, that if the *leaſt thing* be yielded to *Diſſenters*, they will by *degrees* extort the whole from us by their *reſtleſs importunities.* What we yield, we yield not ſo much to *them*, as to the *Peace* of the *Church.* And the wiſdom of thoſe great *Bodies* a *Parliament* and *Convocation* will know where it ought to ſtop. And when once that which is fit is Granted, if Men who affect to be a State party ſhall inſiſt on all that remains, the meer unreaſonableneſs of their demands will procure a denial, and will juſtifie it to all the World.

for will it
e any diſcre-
it to us if the
Diſſenters
ould ſome
f them re-
uſe to acqui-
ice in it;

Nor can I any more think that a Perſon of your good ſenſe ſhould harbour a ſuſpicion, that the *Authority* of this *Church* will be made cheap, and ſeem to be proſtituted by an *Offer* of a *Condeſcenſion*, of which it may be the *Diſſenters* will not accept. It is the grief of all good Men of our Communion, that any of the *Diſſenters* ſhould be guilty of ſo much as the leaſt Appearance of obſtructing this *Union* which they formerly ſeemed ſo impatiently to deſire. And I do own that in ſome of them there is more than an Appearance of *Averſion* to this *Bill*. If it were not ſo, after an univerſal forbearance of *Preaching* or *Writing* in thoſe *Controverſies* on our ſide, Books levell'd both againſt *Liturgy* and *Epiſcopacy* would not come as they do, in this juncture, freſh from the Preſs.

ts it may be
ney will.

But on the
ontrary, ſuch
n *Union* being
fferd by us
vill render
iem inexcuſ-
ble.

However, let that be offer'd by the *Church-men* which may be agreed with ſafety to the *Church*, and which has been ſo *ſolemnly promiſed* by them, and they will at once both *juſtifie* themſelves and render thoſe Men *inexcuſable*, who *advance* towards us when we are *Bound* and *cannot meet them*; and when we *can*, and *come forward*, run back to their old extremities of Averſation.

nd tho the
ntereſted
ſen among
e *Diſſenters*
ay diſlike it,

It is indeed to be feared, that thoſe who cover *Intereſt* under the pretence of *Conſcience*, and perhaps among thoſe ſome few that are *Paſtors* of Wealthy *Congregations*, may be tempted to deſire a continuance of the diſtance betwixt the *Diſſenters* and the *Church-men*. It would be Policy in them to endeavour that the *Exceptions* may remain as means of continuing the *Separation*, ſeeing by that they gain more than they had reaſon to expect if they were ſet in the common level, in the *parochial charges* of a *National Church*.

But

But I have more charitable thoughts of the *ſincere Diſſenters*; and the rather, becauſe this preſent *Bill* is ſo framed, that it may give them all *reaſonable ſatisfaction.* Yet we may Reaſonably Hope, all others will approve it.

For, Firſt: As to thoſe *Diſſenters* who are in the *Miniſtry*, their ſpecial *Objections* have been againſt the *Forms* of *Subſcription* and *Ordination.* But now there is only *one Form* to *ſubſcribe*; and that is ſo adjuſted, that as many of them as are *Epiſcopally Ordain'd* may come into *Parochial Cures*, without *ſcruple* at that which is now required. For them that have not *Epiſcopal Orders*, there will be ſuch a *proviſion* made, as will ſatisfie all the *Miniſters* of the *Foreign Proteſtant Churches*; and there is all reaſon to hope, that it will ſatisfie our *Diſſenters.* And then when they are within the Church, they will have no Temptation to make ſuch *Ordinations* as they are ſaid to have done of *late years*, tho even thoſe they have made are not capable of the *Excuſe* that was made for thoſe in the *Ill Times*; when *Biſhops* were few, and thoſe impriſoned, and otherwiſe diſcountenanced by the *Powers* in being. The conditions of this *Bill* being very *eaſie* both to the *Miniſters*;

And then for the *Diſſenters* among the *Laity*; things that are *indifferent* in their *own Nature*, being left *indifferent* in their *Uſe*, the grand *Objection* of their being made *unlawful* by their *impoſition*, will be perfectly removed. So that be they henceforth *uſed* or not *uſed*, they can be no *Bar* to *Lay-Communion.* And to the *lay-diſſenters.*

For theſe reaſons we cannot but hope that we ſhall have ſome fruit of this *Bill* among the *ſincere Diſſenters* at preſent: But this to be ſure, we ſhall by this means ſecure the *next Generation*, who cannot have thoſe *Prejudices* in- This *Bill* if it has no preſent good effect, yet will ſecure the *next Generation.*

inſtill'd into them, which now by a *publick Law* will be taken away. And for the *French*, and *German*, and other *Foreign Chriſtians* of the *reformed Religion*, I am well aſſured both by *Converſation*, and by *Letters* lately ſent from *Holland*, *Geneva*, *Switzerland*, and other places; (not to ſpeak of the *Churches* of the *Lutheran Communion* which write the ſame;) that they look upon the *Church of England* at this Time as the *Centre* of *Proteſtant Unity*; and eſteem the *Conditions* propoſed in this Bill (which have been *Communicated* to them) as *Terms* full of *Chriſtian Moderation*, and *fit* for the *Uniting* of *Proteſtants*. And you are not to be taught how neceſſary a *Union* is, (eſpecially in this State of affairs) not at *Home only*, but *among all the Proteſtants in the World*.

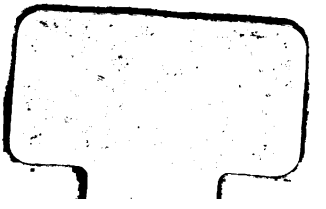
And ſatisfie the *Proteſtant Churches* abroad.

To whom it has been communicated, and who do highly approve the conditions of it.

This *Bill* approved by the *trueſt Sons* of the *Church* of *England*.

It will perhaps be ſome further ſatisfaction to you to let you know, that I am not ſingular in all this that I have with ſo much freedom written to you. Among all thoſe who have *appear'd* in the *Churches Cauſe*, as well againſt *Diſſenters* as *Papiſts*, I do not know one ſingle perſon that is not a *Well-wiſher* to this Bill; and I believe they will all tell you ſo, if you pleaſe to adviſe with them. And ſo far as we may learn the *Genius* of Men from their Writings, Arch-biſhop *Uſher*, Biſhop *Sanderſon*, Dr. *Hammond*, and a long order of other moſt worthy Men of the *laſt Age*, whoſe *Memory* is moſt precious in our Church, had they been now alive, would with all Zeal have promoted this *Bill* of *Union*.

And would be of it

And upon ſuppoſition that there were not in this Nation one ſingle *Diſſenter*, that there were no occaſion for either *Union* or *Comprehenſion*, it would ſtill be the *Churches Intereſt* to propoſe ſomething of like Nature with that which is now under Conſideration, and ripe for its Birth,

UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN
3 9015 06437 0128